

Peace Treaty by Pavel Mikhailovich Florensky

Category: Stranger Things, 2016

Genre: Friendship, Humor

Language: English

Characters: Eleven/Jane H., Lucas S., Max M., Mike W.

Status: Completed

Published: 2019-07-20 23:49:57

Updated: 2019-07-20 23:49:57

Packaged: 2019-12-12 19:06:29

Rating: K

Chapters: 1

Words: 1,388

Publisher: www.fanfiction.net

Summary: Canon Compliant Post-ST3. (Spoiler alert.) Mike and Max have a much needed conversation about the past two years. Features Mike and Max friendship and brief mentions of Mileven and Lumax.

Peace Treaty

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Obligatory Rant: I've been really bothered by some people giving Max or Mike an uncharitable treatment for their characterization in Season 3. Therefore, I have written what I believe to be a viable post-Episode 8 scene ("one-shot") that justifies and explains both characters fairly.

Probably can be considered cannon compliant. (Unless Season 4 comes out and tears it apart.)

Thanks for reading!

Mike Wheeler was sitting in his room on a September Saturday morning looking at the radio in his hand. He had just finished talking to El with the radio he borrowed from Dustin occasionally, and now he needed to decide what to do with his day. School had just begun so there was no where near enough homework to get stressed out about it. Usually they would all head for the arcade or the theatre but one was closed for repairs and the other had recently burned down due to an inter-dimensional monster. Suddenly something El said in their conversation came back to him: "I miss you guys a lot. All of you, but especially you Mike."

At the time, of course, his brain had focused on the romantic sentiment contained in the phrasing but now he was contemplating the context. El missed all of them; she missed the entire Party. For the past few weeks since the Byers' departure Mike had been slowly realizing the fragility that existed within the group he considered central in his life. A look of determination came across his face as he realized what had to be done, that is, what he had to do to make things right again.

Mike lifted the radio and pressed the speaking button: "Mike to Lucas, over."

A moment passed before Lucas responded: "Yeah Mike this is Lucas, over."

"I've got a weird question. Do you have Max's phone number? Over," Mike said.

"Uh, yeah. I do. Why do you want it?" Lucas asked, confused.

Mike paused before answering: "She and I need to talk over some things and I think today is the right day to do it. If you two have plans I totally understand, though."

Lucas replied immediately: "No worries: we don't. I think I understand. Got a pen?". Lucas gave him the number and Mike sighed before stepping out of his room into the hall with the telephone.

The phone in the Mayfield house rang until Max answered it: "Hey. You've got Max."

An awkward moment passed before the last voice she expected came through the receiver: "Hey, Max. This is Mike. Mike Wheeler."

"I think I know who you are Mike," she replied sarcastically.

"Oh yeah, um...sorry. Can we talk?" he replied sheepishly.

"We are talking," she sassed again.

"Hilarious. Comic gold. I'm serious though. Could we meet up somewhere to talk?" Mike asked.

"I'm not even going to ask Wheeler. Fine. How about Forrest Hills Park?" Max suggested.

"Okay. Works for me. An hour from now?" Mike confirmed.

"Sure. You better bring me a coffee for my trouble," Max said.

"Will do," Mike said before hanging up. She agreed and that was a good sign.

Mike arrived at the park with two cups from Hawkins' only coffee shop. He looked around and saw the park was nearly empty except for a few people and that there was an empty bench beneath an oak tree. Sitting down, he closed his eyes to think through what he was going to say to the red-haired girl when she got here.

When she finally did arrive she sat down next to the boy quietly before speaking: "That second coffee for me?".

Mike jerked his head to the side and exclaimed softly: "Max! You, well, yes it is. Here." He handed the coffee to her and they both took a pause to sip at the black liquid.

Max broke the silence: "Alright Mike. Thanks for the coffee but you asked me here to talk about something, and unless its the quality of Indiana coffee we aren't getting anywhere."

Laughing, Mike began: "We haven't exactly gotten along very well in the past have we?".

"Ya think?" Max said.

Ignoring the sass, Mike continued: "When we first met I wasn't very nice to you. I was mean and tried to make you feel unwelcome in our Party. I'm sorry."

"I understood. You had a pretty bad case of broken-heart when El was missing. I wouldn't exactly be friendly in that situation either," Max replied.

"Yeah but I feel like things haven't really improved much since. When El broke up with me I tried to tell myself it was your fault. That somehow you had 'poisoned her against me' or something. I know it was stupid but I was scared and I lashed out," Mike rambled while looking at his hands.

"You do have the tendency to be very...expressive about your feelings," Max responded.

"I'm sorry Max. I think I have a bit of a problem when it comes to trying to 'fix things' even when no one wants me to," Mike said. His voice had grown soft but Max knew now wasn't the time to poke at

that expressed weakness.

"I understand that Mike. I think it's my turn now," Max said with a kind smile.

Mike looked at her with confusion: "Your turn for what?"

"It's my turn to say something to you. Yeah, you've got some issues but I know that you mean well. You thought that you could keep her safe in the same way you had when she was a scared child on the run. It was stupid but you were trying to do the right thing," Max said.

"You're right I suppose. I hadn't really thought of it that way before," Mike mumbled just audibly enough for her to hear.

"I'm sorry too, Wheeler," the girl responded.

"Sorry for what? You were right," Mike asked.

"I might have been right about what you were doing but I wasn't right about you. I also wasn't right about you and El. I never should have told her to break up with you. It works for me and Lucas but you guys aren't really the same as us. Your relationship is really deep. I should have told her to talk to you about it," Max rambled.

"Mrs. Byers would call it a 'heart to heart;' she loves having those," Mike said with a smile.

"Yeah I guess that was the right thing. I just wanted El to experience her independence and individuality. She's had such a controlled life and I want her to taste freedom," Max said.

"I didn't realize I was preventing that. I convinced myself that I could be overprotective and respectful at the same time. How wrong I was," Mike replied.

"And I thought her shoving you away was the only way to change you. I didn't think about how much it would hurt you both," Max returned.

They sat in silence before Mike spoke again: "I guess we were both

kind of 'mouth-breathers.'"

"Yeah. But we're done with that now right? We know better," Max responded.

"I hope so. Friends?" Mike asked.

"Of course. We were always friends. From now on let's be allies too," Max suggested.

"Allies? Sounds like some sort of peace treaty. So what are we? The coalition of Party members who love El just a bit too much?" Mike joked.

"Sounds good to me Wheeler. Let's go call her! She'll be so confused!" Max suggested with excitement. Mike laughed and the two ran off towards the Wheeler residence.

Needless to say, El was very confused that afternoon when she received a call on her radio from Mike and Max. Her two dearest friends rarely did anything alone together so she was pleasantly surprised. Peace had been restored in Hawkins. Come Thanksgiving, El could look forward to seeing the new alliance for herself.

Thanks for reading! Please leave a review with your thoughts.

Спасибо за чтение! Пожалуйста, напишите отзыв и поделитесь своими мыслями.